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FIFTY YEARS AGO
FEBRUARY 1956

Lives had been disrupted by World War II. A decade later the church was being influenced by the needs of the influx of new young families and the needs of the returned veterans whose horizons had been expanded.

The church was breaking out of its insular ethnicity. We noted that four Orthodox priests of different nationalities co-celebrated on a special Christmas program aired over the powerful KDKA Pittsburgh radio station. Fr. Waschak was the able commentator. Letters were received from around the nation commenting on the program.

In another part of the country, Fr. Glagolev received permission to start a mission in Encino, California, which would use the English language as the primary language. "To extend Orthodoxy in America through the use of English."

Metropolitan Leonty had sent us a handwritten letter in which he enclosed a donation to the Alaska Fund. It is amazing that he took the time since the "staff" in New York at this time (the 50's) was miniscule. He wrote in his letter no. 2178: "Among the papers of the late Bishop Jonah were filed copies of The Orthodox Herald ... Bishop Jonah's notations indicated that he valued and treasured this small, but powerful, and influential publication which heralds the truth concerning the Orthodox Church in the New World."

Among other items in Chronology we stated that Mr. Gretchanenoff, the famous composer had died. He wrote many compositions which are sung in Orthodox Churches.

We must go back about 25 more years to the 1920's to glean from the

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PRAYER OF THE OPTINA HERMITAGE

O Lord, grant that I may face everything this day holds in store for me with composure.

O Lord, grant that I may wholly resign myself on Thy Will.

O Lord, instruct and support me every hour of this day.

O Lord, reveal Thy Will to me and those around me. Whatever tidings I receive in the course of the day, grant that I may receive them with peace in my soul and the firm conviction that everything happens according to Thy Will.

O Lord, Great and Gracious, guide my thoughts and feelings in all my deeds and words; in all unforeseen circumstances, do not let me forget that everything is decreed by Thee.

O Lord, grant that I may deal prudently with everyone near and dear to me, offending none and embarrassing none.

O Lord, give me the strength to endure the weariness of this day and all its events. Guide my will and teach me to pray and love everyone without partiality.

Amen.

LIGHTER MOMENT

A man had 50-yard-line tickets for the Super Bowl. As he sits down, a man comes down and asks if anyone is sitting in the seat next to him. "No," he says, "the seat is empty."

"This is incredible," said the man. "Who in their right mind would have a seat like this for the Super Bowl, the biggest sporting event in the world, and not use it?"

He says, "Actually, the seat belongs to me. I was supposed to come with my

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UPDATE YOUR DIPTICH

Great Lent does not begin until March 6 but we are already preparing for it. The Sunday of February 5 is dedicated to Zaccheus (Luke 19:1-10) and it serves as a sign telling us: "Be Attentive Great Lent Is Coming." And along the way for the next four weeks we are given signs which prepare us for this Great Lent, which will culminate in the news that: Christ is Risen from the Dead ... and that He gives life to those who are in the tombs.

There are several things which we must do to get ready. One of them is to bring our diptich up-to-date and give it to the priest before February 25, which is the first in the series of Memorial Saturdays. The others this year are: March 18 and 25, April 1, June 10, October 21/November 4.

Diptichs (hramoti) are lists on which the living and dead members of a family are noted. Each one is kept separately and must be updated as marriages, births or deaths change them from year to year. Each parish seems to have its own system. In some the books are kept in the church and members take them periodically to update them. In other parishes, lists are made each year and given to the priest.

On the dates given above, special prayers are said after the Divine Liturgy for all names listed as deceased. Each name is chanted out loud at the Panahida (Memorial Service). Remember your departed ones who are awaiting that great and dreadful day of His Second Coming by attending the services and praying for them.

Metropolitan Bloom wrote the following: "We know nothing about death. We do not know what happens to us at the moment of death, but we

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CHRONOLOGY

FEBRUARY 2006

THE ANTIOCHIAN ARCHDIOCESE has formally withdrawn from the National Council of Churches. Among reasons given was the general liberalism of the NCC.

AN ICON OF THE VALAAM Mother of God was launched into space aboard the Progress-M-54, cargo spaceship from the Baihonur space center in September. The Progress-M-54 carried 2.5 tons of supplies to spacemen Sergei Krikalev and John Phillips.

THE MENNONITE CHURCH USA issued a policy statement on abortion, expressing opposition to the procedure but not calling for it to be illegal. Abortion "runs counter to biblical principals," the statement says, and can be permissible in "the most exceptional of circumstances," such as saving a mother's life. The church cautioned that "what the law permits is not necessarily moral behavior for the Christian."

ORTHODOXJOBS is a source for Orthodox Christians who are seeking employment in an Orthodox environment. It is a collaborative effort of the Information Technologies Commission of SCOBA and the Office of Vocations at Hellenic College and St. Vladimir's Seminary. For info http://www.orthodoxjobs.com? ? /

CHURCH MEMBERS OF ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH, which was destroyed on 9/11, met at the former site of their church on St. Nicholas Day, Dec. 6, for an outdoor service. They prayed, among other things, for the opportunity to rebuild their church. Plans are being held up because the Port Authority has still not finalized plans as to the new location of the church. It will not be located at its original site.

A TRAVELING ICONOSTASION of leather with six icons is available from St. Nectarios Press, 10300 Ashworth Avenue N, Seattle, WA 98133-9410 for $25 plus P & H. Call 1-800-643-4233 for info. Closed it is less than 3 inches high and wide and 1 inch thick. Open it is 14 3/4 inches.

SCOBA MEETING in November approved an agenda for the Oct. 2006 meeting in Chicago of the nine jurisdictions making up SCOBA. A Clergy Seminar will be held soon on Christian/Muslim Relations.

THE EUROPEAN UNION is having difficulty finding qualified interpreters and translaters since it has expanded to 25 nations which use 20 different languages. Official documents must be translated into each language and the number of translated pages is increasing.

SCOBA JURISDICTIONS through the IOCC (International Orthodox Charities) have collected over $3 million as of early December. An IOCC-supported mobile medical van will be in continuous operation through March to offer medical services in the New Orleans area.

AN 88-MINUTE DOCUMENTARY about St. Tikhon's Monastery centennial is available in either DVD or VHS format for $24 from Grisha Pictures, 3620 Cloverfield Rd., Harrisburg, PA 17109-2540. It contains many archival photos from the arrival of the first monks and the first Russian Orthodox Sobor on the U.S. Continent in 1917-1918 to the present.

ANOTHER POPULAR WINTER FESTIVAL, sponsored by the St. Tikhon's Century Association, will be held at St. Mary's Center, 320 Mufflin Ave., Scranton, PA on Sunday, February 19 from 3 p.m. For info contact: Mary Sernak, 700 Delaware St., Mayfield, PA 18433.

THE MOSAIC FLOOR of a 3rd century church has been uncovered in northern Israeli near the biblical Armageddon. It may be the remains of the oldest church of Christianity. It was found when ground was being cleared to build a prison to house 1200 Palestinian prisoners. Mosaics cleared show that a Roman officer and a woman named Aketous donated money to build the church in the memory "of the God, Jesus Christ."

GOD WITH US PUBLICATIONS, which has published an icon packet for the Great Feast days, which is used by many religious education classes, has now released another packet of icons with educational commentary entitled "Revelation in Color: The Word of God in Icons," which includes 50 icons illustrating Gospel scenes. For info call 877/484-1600.

ST. PAISIUS SERBIAN ORTHODOX MONASTERY in Safford, Arizona, recently dedicated a new church to Dormition of the Mother of God. The women's monastery also has a log chapel dedicated to St. Anastasi, a cemetery, school for girls, and a guesthouse.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE ORTHODOX FAITH on a site containing prayers, readings, icons and links to several other Orthodox resources can be found at http://ocf.org/Orthodox Page/

NOT TO BE CONFUSED is the OCA (Orthodox Church of America) and the Rusyn OCA (Rusyn Orthodox Church Abroad), which is headquartered near Odessa, Ukraine.

IN RUSSIA AS IN AMERICA THERE ARE many different translations of the Bible. Among them the Synodal version translated in the 19th century containing so many archaic words that to many it is almost incomprehensible; the Cassian translation of the New Testament, which used a greek text for word order and is considered unreadable; the "Easy to Read" version published in 1989 by the Church of Christ-World Bible Translation Center, which is popular but is criticized for inaccuracy; the World of Life translation published in 1991 similar to the English New International Version, which also has glaring mistakes; and a 1992 translation of the gospels by V.N. Kuznetsova, which aims at accuracy but runs counter to the traditions of the Russian Orthodox Church. The official text used by the Russian Orthodox Church is still in the Old Slavonic language.

(Continued from front page)

FIFTY YEARS AGO

"History of the Orthodox Church in America" by Basil Bensin. In the February 1956 issue he wrote about the tenure of Metropolitan Platon who was elected Metropolitan of the church at the historic Detroit Sobor of 1924. The American Church was cut off from the Russian Church and it found itself orphaned. How would they govern themselves? It was decided to elect a council of laymen and clergy who would help to administer the Church. This body is now known as the Metropolitan Council. ROCMAS and UROBA and other fraternal organizations came to the aid of the Church. Metropolitan Platon was no longer able to use the St.. Nicholas Cathedral at 13 East 97th Street. The Episcopal Church came to the aid and gave us a church on Houston Street to use as our Orthodox Cathedral.

Metropolitan Platon found it necessary to transfer the seminary from Tenafly to New York but had to close it in 1923 because of financial problems as aid had been cut off from Russia. However, the graduates of Tenafly formed an active alumni association to promote the reopening. They held annual reunions, published a monthly newspaper entitled Alma Mater which dealt with the general problems of the church and promoted religious education by publishing leaflets and books in both the English and Russian languages. The FROC, an organization for the young people, was organized in 1927. Metropolitan Platon gave his blessings in 1925 for the Syro-Arabian Mission of America, which had been under his amophor since organizing in 1895 to become affiliated with the Patriarch of Antioch. It took the name of Syrian Antiochian Orthodox Church of America. Mr. Basil Bensin's article was to continue in the March issue, giving the history of the Russian Orthodox Church in America.

Our February 1956 issue stated that ground was broken for the National War Memorial Shrine in Washington, DC. We wrote that its purpose was to have representation in our capital and that it was to be a monument to Orthodox Russians and Americans who gave their lives for God and country. Funds were solicited throughout the United States. The Memorial Church was dedicated to St. Nicholas, located at 3500 Massachusetts Ave. NW. It now serves as the cathedral church of Metropolitan Herman.

(Continued from front page)

LIGHTER MOMENT

wife, but she passed away. This is the first Super Bowl we haven't been together since we got married in 1967."

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. That's terrible. But couldn't you find someone else - a friend or relative or even a neighbor to take the seat?" The man shakes his head, "No, they're all at the funeral."

(Continued from front page)

UPDATE YOUR DIPTICH

know at least in some rudimentary way what eternal life is. Each of us knows through experience that there are moments when he already exists not in time, but in the fullness of life, in a happiness that does not belong simply to the earth. Therefore, the first thing we must teach ourselves and others, is to prepare not for death but for life; if we talk of death, it should be only as a door that is to open wide to us and allow us to enter into eternal life… Then death becomes a victory: "O death, where is thy sting?! O death, where is thy victory. Christ is risen, and not one is dead in the tomb…" Victory over death, over fear of death, rests in living so as to live ever more deeply in eternity, and so as to bring others to partake of the fullness of life.

LIGHTER MOMENT

Read in a church bulletin: "We'll be gift-wrapping the presents that you are bringing to distribute to the nursing homes, so please drop off any boxed gifts that you want wrapped in a garbage bag."

CHURCHING OF WOMEN

Many women question the Service of Churching of Women, which a new mother participates in 40 days after the birth of her child. This tradition is allied to the Holy Day of the Presentation of Our Lord into the Temple, which is celebrated on February 2/15, and they must be studied together to be understood.

This is a Scriptural Holy Day. According to the Gospel of St. Luke 2:21-40, St. Mary the Mother of Jesus took Him to the Temple on the 40th day after His Birth to fulfill the Law of Moses and to offer a sacrifice customary on such occasions. The Orthodox Church has carried this tradition over into its ritual. Following the example of His Mother, a mother brings her child to the parish church on the 40 day after its birth for "Vocerkovlenijie" or "Churching," to make a beginning of its being taken into the church.

On the mother's part, this is a service of thanksgiving, to show gratitude to God for the blessings conferred by motherhood and to ask God's forgiveness for any wrongs committed and to ask for the grace necessary to bring up the child in a Christian manner.

The prayers of the service make much reference to St. Simeon, who received Christ into the Temple and who said the beautiful prayer, which is a part of every vesper service and naturally is a part of the Churching Service. "Lord now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word. For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; To be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to the glory of Thy people Israel. (Luke 2:29-32).

May all mothers present themselves in the church "in the fulfilling of the 40 days," following the Biblical example of the Mother of God and to receive the Grace, which is so essential to guide her child.

* * * * * *

God promises a safe landing not a calm passage.

THE MEETING OF THE LORD

The Law of Moses, in Leviticus, Esther and Exodus prescribed that every Jewish mother, after giving birth to a boy child, was to be excluded from attendance at public worship for 40 days. At the end of that period, she had to present a yearling lamb for a burnt sacrifice and a pigeon for a sin-offering, thus purifying herself from ritual uncleanliness. In the case of poor people, two pigeons sufficed as an offering.

The Gospel (Luke 2:22-38) reports how Mary, after the birth of Jesus, fulfilled this command of the Law, and how on the same occasion Simeon and Anna met the newborn Saviour.

This Holy Day - The Meeting of the Lord or the Presentation of Our Lord into the Temple, which we celebrate on February 2/15, was first observed very early in the Church. The first historical description of the day is given in the diary of Egeria, a lady from Spain, who made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 380. She mentions the services which were held in Jerusalem on that day. From Jerusalem the Holy Day spread into the other countries of the Eastern World. Here it was known as the Meeting of the Lord in commemoration of Christ's meeting with Simeon and Anna. In the Western World, the day was first observed in the 7th and 8th century and it bore the name Purification of Mary.

We will hear this sung on this day: "We magnify Thee, O Christ the Giver of Life, and we honor Thy most pure mother, who now brings Thee according to the law, unto the Temple of the Lord."

All over Europe, this day was considered one of the great days of weather forecasting. Popular belief claims that bad weather and cloudy skies on Feburary 2 mean an early and prosperous summer. If the sun shines through the greater part of this day, there will be at least 40 more days of cold and snow. This superstition is familiar to us as many wait on February 2 to see if Punxsutawney Phil, the groundhog, sees his shadow on this day.

MISS SUNDAY DIVINE LITURGY

When I visited the Soviet Union during Communist time, I attended one church which had barricades around it because so many people were trying to get into the church. It created a hazard. As a foreigner, I was let in after someone left. I realized that church attendance is a privilege not only on that occasion but every Sunday when home in my own church.

Of course, some people cannot attend because of physical problems or some other legitimate reason. But those who can be in church, should be. One reason is that we are told to keep the Lord's Day holy by attending the Divine Liturgy. Besides this, the prayers, singing, teaching of God's Word and fellowship are just what we need for the week ahead.

The Nashville Banner reported that 81-year-old Ella Craig had perfect attendance in Sunday School and worship service for 20 years. That's 1,040 Sundays! The article then raised these questions:

1. Doesn't Mrs. Craig ever have company over on Sunday to keep her away from church?

2. Doesn't she ever have headaches, colds, tired feelings, or nervous spells?

3. Doesn't she ever take a weekend trip/go to the shore or mountains?

4. Doesn't she ever sleep in on Sunday morning?

5. Doesn't it ever rain or snow on Sunday morning?

6. Doesn't she ever get her feelings hurt by someone in the church?

7. Doesn't she know that she's a senior citizen and she could excuse herself?

The article concluded by asking, "What's the matter with Mrs. Craig? The answer is nothing at all. She takes her example from Psalm 122:1. "I was glad when they said to me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek your good."

Church attendance is a privilege. Let's look at it this way.

* * * * * *

God grades on the Cross, not the curve.

THE CREED

Bishops and theologians of the Church, primarily from the East, met in Nicea in 325 and then in Constantinople in 381 to hammer out a creedal confession in the face of a serious challenge to the Orthodox faith.

The issues that caused the emperors to call the meetings centered on biblical testimony concerning the divinity of the Son, His relationship to the Father, and the divinity of the Spirit in relation to the other persons of the Trinity. Also at stake was God's sovereignty as creator of all that is, even beyond what can be seen by us.

One of the roles creeds play is to help us understand Scripture. Creeds help the church find self-identity and lead us to worship God. To boldly confess God as maker of all is a grand opportunity for contemplation and praise.

"I believe in one God, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible." W.W.

FUNDS

ALASKA: Ethel Watlock, Mary Pavlushuk
MISSION: Phyllis Loope, Joseph and Helen Chrash, National Slovak Society
ALASKA AND MISSION: Mary Zemanik, George Kupar, Boris Gontcharenko, Dorothy Stafiniak
POSTAGE: Joseph and Helen Chrash, Irine Barnett, Mary Pavlushuk, George Kupar, Mary Kaminsky, Steven Mikilas, John Hatzi, Beverly Karol, Anonymous, Mildred Staskiews, Valerie Kline, Mary Chupak, Sandra Fedorko in memory of parents, Lewis and Stella Shemet Dvorsky.

* * * * * *

The Council of Carthage in 397 confirmed the 27 New Testament books. Several lists had been created prior to that time, but each excluded some books or included others. While most Christians acknowledge the four Gospels and the Letters of St. Paul as inspired, there was great debate over Hebrews, James, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, and Revelation. The Council confirmed the decision made at Hippo in 393, using the two criterions of apostolic origin and wide church use.

Memories

Baba's Apprentice

Growing up in my family was very much centered around the church, religious activities, stories of the old country, Easter, Great Lent, Christmas, and other religious holidays. Family and friends would gather at each other's home where traditional foods were served and enjoyed.

In my early years, I did not realize how much of a role model Baba would play in my life. I guess a lot was expected of me, since I was the first girl in nine generations on my Dad's side.

With great anticipation, I looked forward to spending every summer and holiday with Baba. I learned time-honored recipes in cooking, canning, and baking, and the proper do's and don'ts of church etiquette. Her kindness and loving patience made me want to learn.

My Dad and Mom spoke Russian and English at home. But with Baba, it was all Russian. Dido was also involved when it came to the teaching of the Bible and the church.

After evening prayers in front of her favorite icon of the Holy Family, Baba and I would cuddle under her featherbed and she would teach me all the prayers in Russian. And I had to recite them till I got them right. To this day, I have her favorite icon next to my bed. And so as I reach my 60th birthday, she is still a great part of my life.

What Baba taught me in my early years is what I have given to my children and grandchildren. I have passed on these traditions to them that only Baba and I would know. Let us not forsake traditions and all the Babas.

Johanna Martynick

Memories

Going to the Movies

My sister, Betty, and I have so many memories, one of which goes back over 50 years. You could go to the show for 25 cents and two boxes of popcorn for 50 cents, and the best part was you could stay in the movie theater all afternoon. Then we would go home and have chicken and dumplings put on the old Charming kitchen stove, which I don't think is around anymore.

We still go to the movies, but they are not 25 cents anymore. Sometimes, I wish we could go back to the good old days.

Charlotte Kokes

Please send your MEMORIES to Margaret Pysarchyk at 2125 Garfield St., Lorain, OH 44055 or mpysarchyk@hotmail.com

ETHNIC CHUCKLE

Dorohaya Tyotya Maria,

See yah taka dobra gevka. Yah promisovala vam zhe yah budoo peesatee vam at least every dva months. EEh yah doing it!

Yak tam kolo vas? Toot shitko edya OK. Yah nehmam too much vam peesatee, noh yak poveem vam za me little problem. Yah barz gainooyou weight again. Me staree kretchet nah mena ee me doctor neh too happy either. Ohn got menye for lost case boh last time me poveel "Anna, you've got to lose some weight. You've gained too much. You don't listen to me. If you insist upon eating halushki and perohee, you better increase your activity. I suggest you take a half hour walk every day."

Yah promisovala zhe yah budoo walkovatee zah pool hodeenee every day. Yah toh povela me next door neighbor. Ah ohna kazhe me zhe yah better buy myself a pair of good walking shoes. Yah dumam walking shoes? Shoes toh shoes, noh? Anyway, yah peeshla doh shoe storuy kupetee paroo walking shoes. Clerk, takee mladee with diamond v nosee asked me: "What kind of shoes you looking for lady?" Yah stopped staring nah diamond in his nose ee ya yemoo kazho: "Walking shoes."

Ohn kazhee me: "Lady, it's important to know what kind of surface you'll be walking on. Hard or soft?" Yah kazyu: "Outside, nah streetye."

Ohn ma takee expression yak yah takee dum lady ee asked: "Since you aren't sure, do you want Adidas, Nikes, Counsels? Do you plan to wear them in the winter or summer? In the rain?" Ohn mah yestye more questions.

Yah dostala taka confused. Yah dumam zhe yah scrazuyu. Yah looked at him ee kazyu: "Look, kid, I just want a pair of anytime, anywhere, any kind walking shoes. You gonna help me or not?"

Ohn got disgusted ee kazhe me: "Don't you know, lady, if you don't have the right kind of shoes you'll have big trouble. You might get shin splints, back pain, blisters, knee troubles, ee yestyeh more troubles."

Yah neh znam what yah gotta do. So yah thankovala him nicely ee peshla domu. Yah decided if yah dostanoo takee troublees walking better just take it easy. Pomaloo.

Budteh zdrovee,
Getting bigger,
Hanya

BIBLE QUIZ

1. What meat was eaten at the Passover meal?
2. Who fasted after his child by Bathsheba died?
3. Who prepared a meal for two angels in Sodom?
4. What Roman official was fasting and praying when an angel told him to send for Peter?
5. Who read the prophecy of Jeremiah when the people of Jerusalem gathered for a fast?
6. What prophet's preaching drove the people of Nineveh to fast?
7. Who fasted before leaving Babylon for Jerusalem?

ANSWERS:
1. Lamb (Exodus 12:1-20)
2. David (2 Samuel 12:15-16)
3. Lot (Genesis 19:1-3)
4. Cornelius (Acts 10:1-3)
5. Baruch (Jeremiah 36:9-10)
6. Jonah (3:4-10)
7. Ezra (8:21-23)

SOBORNOST
ELECTION OF BISHOPS (II)

Canon 28 of the Council of Chalcedon held in 451 includes two distinct decisions.

First, it establishes confirmation of canon 3 of Constantinople, the ecumenical character of which was not universally recognized; the church of Rome, in particular, had not accepted it.

And, secondly, it grants the church of Constantinople jurisdiction over several civil dioceses, a privilege it had enjoyed in practice for quite some time, but which had been accorded only the churches of Rome, Alexandria and Antioch by the sixth canon of Nicea.

Canon 28 of Chalcedon would be a source of contention between Rome and the East: their two positions boil down to a different exegesis of canon 6 of Nicea. In their quarrel the see of Rome wins the initial victory: it would obtain not only a temporary annulment of canon 28, but also the apologies of Anatolios, reigning bishop of Constantinople. Thus, the "Collection of the Canons under Fifty Headings" (composed in the middle of fifth century by Byzantine Patriarch John Scholasticus) includes only 27 canons of Chalcedon.

But whether the pope liked it or not, the bishop of Constantinople did, in fact, exercise, since the end of the fourth century, the *exousia* (authority) which canon 28 legally affords him. This power is not disputed in the East; it is not disputed even by the victims of Constantinople, particularly the bishops of Alexandria and Antioch, whose authority is considerably reduced in the fifth and sixth centuries. Canon 28 thus reappears in the "Collection under Fourteen Headings" in the seventh century, and the Council in Trullo (692) proclaims it as definitively accepted (Quinisext Council, canon 36).

How does the Orthodox theology of *sobornost* explain this canonical process? The ecclesiology of the East, on the one hand, recognizes the absolute, ontological identity of all local churches with each other and, on the other hand, requires that they live and act in unity. The "primacies" or "priorities" of some churches are defined – first morally (as in the case at Constantinople in 381) and then jurisdictionally (as at Chalcedon) – as tools for securing this unity of the churches. Such definitions can only be made through ecclesial **consensus** (i.e. conciliarity). And they do not create "super-bishops" invested with "power" **over** the other churches: primates are responsible <u>before</u> the churches in their ministry of unity.

Fr. Michael Dahulich, Ph.D.
Dean of St. Tikhon's Seminary

WINTER'S GRACE

If you've experienced an intense feeling of loss, you'll appreciate the words of David in Psalm 55, penned during a painful time in his life. Oppressed by the wicked, hated by his enemies, and betrayed by a friend, David spoke of the anxiety and anguish that threatened to crush his spirit: "Fearfulness and trembling have come upon me, and horror has overwhelmed me." (v.5)

But instead of caving in to fear, David poured out his heart to God: "As for me, I will call upon God, and the Lord shall save me. Evening and morning and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice." (vs. 16-17)

Prayer lifts our eyes from personal tragedy to the compassion of God. "Lord, have mercy." It enables us to cast our burdens on the Lord instead of breaking under their weight. When our hearts are filled with pain, call on God in prayer – morning, noon, and especially in the dark, quiet hours of the night. God will hear your words; but, better yet, He will listen to your heart.

* * * * * *

Solitude, prayer, love and abstinence are the four wheels of the vehicle that carries our spirit heavenward. (St. Seraphim)

Undique (from everywhere)

Deuteronomy, the fifth book of the Bible, is a Greek word meaning the "second law." This was the second telling of the Law to the generation of Israelites who had come out of the wilderness.

Moses fasted for 40 days, Elisha fasted for 40 days, and Christ fasted for 40 days. When they fasted they ate nothing! This is obviously not possible for us, so we do the next best thing, we eat less and make a small sacrifice by not eating food from certain food categories like meat and dairy products.

Much of this month we are in the pre-Lenten period. Why not prepare for Pascha by planning to read from the book of Isaiah together as a family this coming Lent? It is full of predictions about the long-awaited Messiah that are perfectly fulfilled by the birth, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. These ancient predictions are read during Holy Week, so we can see their truth for ourselves.

In many churches, candles are blessed on the Holy Day of the Meeting of the Lord (Feb 2/15). This brings to mind the words of St. Simeon that Christ is "the light that enlightens" all mankind. Many call these candles "Hromnitza" or "Thunder." They are lighted when severe thunderstorms occur and at other significant times in a person's life.

No matter how perfect one is, he always needs a page of Scripture. In the same way one also needs the holy images painted in accordance with the Scriptures. Therefore, we venerate and honor them both (scripture and icons) in the same way. St. Theodore the Studite.

After receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the apostles set out for the four corners of the known earth bringing the message of salvation. Decades passed before there were any writings which were universally recognized as Holy Scriptures.

Family traditions, no matter how small or trivial they seem, are as important to the growing-up process as a healthy diet and safety rules. Having traditions to pass on to our children and then they to their children helps form the spine that unifies and strengthens a family as well as an individual.

Editor's Notes

Here in northern Pennsylvania we are in the middle of winter by our calendar and by the calendar, which our forefathers used, the church calendar. They believed that the Holy Day of the Meeting of the Lord was the turning from winter to spring. If it was a hard winter – it is no wonder that they looked for signs of the coming spring!

It is most interesting to go out and look around my house after the fresh snowfalls. I am always surprised to see so many animal tracks. There are actually pathways made by different animals. I like to try to identify them. It's obvious that my land does not belong to me alone!

I want to thank all of you who sent me greetings. They did not get into a box and be forgotten. I take one out each day at my morning prayer time and I pray for the one who has sent it. What warm feelings it brings as I think about your kindness and thoughtfulness!

It is pre-lent. My sister has reminded me that I must include a note about finishing up the meat in your freezer. It is best that it be all gone before Lent.

I want to thank the Slaby family, who have again sponsored a Packet Plan for their parish in memory of their parents and grandparents – Anthony and Stephanie Adamcio Pawlik. May their memory be eternal!

I have been receiving many comments on the "50 Years Ago" column. It's startling to realize that I lived through those years. The comments are positive and most are surprised to learn of the activity and aliveness during those years. They ask: Why is this no longer true? In one of these early issues we quoted that well-known saying: "The chain is as strong as its weakest link." It seems that the links, the parishes on the local level, have taken a secondary position to the national church. The feeling that this is my church is being minimized. This is ironic, since both the laity and clergy are better educated and have better resources to manage at the local level. The balance must be restored or people will feel more and more alienated from their parish.

"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ into eternal life.

Matushka Nina Stroyen

PRESS FUND

Thank you/Spasebo to all who have sent help to keep us publishing. Your notes were heartwarming.

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Christmas Gifts from Steve and Irene Pacak, John Glagola, Jr. and family, Fr. Peter and Pani Charlotte Staviski, Paul and Adamandia Baumgarten and family.

In memory of Job.

LIGHTER MOMENT

Read in a church bulletin: "We'll be gift-wrapping the presents that you are bringing to distribute to the nursing homes, so please drop off any boxed gifts that you want wrapped in a garbage bag."



This year maslinitsa/butter week comes in February. Bliny or pancakes are traditionally served. But for those of you who live in northern climes and want something hot, how about this Chicken Stew, which was sent to me by Dr. Nadia? It is delicious and as she wrote: Incredible! It does call for an old chicken, which is almost impossible to find. You may have to make do with a roaster plus a couple of bouillon cubes or cans of chicken broth added.

DR. NADIA'S CHICKEN STEW

1 large old chicken
water to cover
2 carrots, coarsely chopped
2 stalks celery, coarsely chopped
1 large onion, chopped
2 medium bay leaves
1 Tbls. garlic powder
1/4 to 1/2 cup soy sauce
1 pkg. Knox herb soup
3 peeled potatoes, coarsely chopped
10 oz. pkg. frozen peas
2 cups Bisquick
1 cup water

Place chicken in large heavy pot. Cover with cold water. Slowly bring to boil, skim. Add carrots, celery, onion, bay leaf, garlic powder and soy sauce. Simmer until chicken is tender, about an hour.

Remove chicken from pot. When cool, remove skin and bones. Return to pot. Add package of Knox soup, potatoes and peas. Simmer for 1/2 hour.

Mix Bisquick with water. Drop dough by large tablespoonfuls into simmering stew. Should have about 15 dumplings. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Uncover and simmer for 10 minutes more.

Comments:
1. I find it is better to remove dumplings when storing as they tend to take up all the liquid.
2. You may not need to simmer 1 1/2 hours if using a young chicken.
3. You may want to use less soy sauce.
4. Taste and add salt and pepper, if needed.

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WHAT DOES GOD EXPECT OF US?

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REMEMBER WHOSE YOU ARE

When I was a young child, I would be invited to a friend's house to play. Before I would leave, my mother would say to me: "Remember who you are!" I knew what that meant. That was her way of saying that I belonged to a family with high standards and that I was not to behave in a way that would embarrass me then or later or my family.

But each one of us has another identity besides our family name. We belong to the family of God. We are God's children, created in God's image. We belong to God, we were "inscribed in His Book of Life" at our baptism so we must never forget "whose" we are.

I wear a cross around my neck. When I am tempted to say or do something that is contrary to the teachings of Christ and the Church, I touch that cross and remember whose I am. And when life gets scary and out of control, I touch that cross and make the sign of the cross and remember who and whose I am and who is with me to see me through.

LIGHTER MOMENT

Bobby's parents tried their best to keep him from acting up during the Divine Liturgy, but they were losing the battle. Finally, his father picked up the little fellow and walked sternly up the aisle to apply a little discipline. Just before reaching the narthex, little Bobby turned his head and called loudly to the congregation: "Pray for me! Pray for me!

Home Bible Reading Schedule

FEBRUARY 2006

1. Mark 11:23-26
2. Mark 11:27-33
3. Mark 12:1-12
4. Luke 17:3-10
5. **Luke 19:1-10**
6. Mark 12:13-17
7. Mark 12:18-27
8. Mark 12:28-37
9. Mark 12:38-44
10. Mark 12:1-18
11. Luke 18:1-8
12. **Luke 12:10-14**
13. Mark 13:9-13
14. Mark 13:14-23
15. Mark 13:24-31
16. Mark 13:31-14;2
17. Mark 14:3-9
18. Luke 20:46-21:4
19. **Luke 15:11-32**
20. Mark 11:1-11
21. Mark 14:10-42
22. Mark 14:43-15:1
23. Mark 15:1-15
24. Mark 15:20-25, 33-41
25. Luke 21:8-9, 25-27, 33-36
26. **Matt 25:31-46**
27. Luke 19:29-40; 22:7-39
28. Luke 22:39-23:1

BIBLE STUDY

Among the readings for this month is the one about the Prodigal Son found in Luke 15:11-32. So many lessons can be drawn from it. One which we do not often hear is about forgiveness. This includes, perhaps the hardest words to say, I'm sorry. In Jesus' story the headstrong young man who returned home after squandering his inheritance approached his father with humility and remorse and apologized: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son." He expressed regret for the pain he had caused, took responsibility for what he had done, and was prepared to work as a hired servant.

As Christians, we have the same responsibility to repent and sincerely say "I'm sorry" whenever we wrong another person. In a spirit of humility and love, we can help those who need to forgive us by offering a genuine apology.

A meaningful apology can be the first step toward forgiveness. The successful apology dissolves anger and humiliation. It shows respect, builds trust, and helps prevent further misunderstanding. A sincere apology makes it much easier to forgive. It can't change the past, but it can brighten the future.

GAVE ALL

Many years ago, when I worked as a transfusion volunteer at Stanford Hospital, I got to know a little girl named Liza, who was suffering from a disease and needed blood from her five-year-old brother, who had miraculously survived the same disease and had developed the antibodies needed to combat the illness. The doctor explained the situation to her little brother, and asked the boy if he would be willing to give his blood to his sister. I saw him hesitate for only a moment before taking a deep breath and saying, "Yes, I'll do it if it will save Liza."

As the transfusion progressed, he lay in bed next to his sister and smiled, as we all did, seeing the color returning to her cheeks. Then his face grew pale and his smile faded. He looked up at the doctor and asked with a trembling voice, "Will I start to die right away?" Being young, the boy had misunderstood the doctor, he thought he was going to have to give her all his blood.